

03<sup>rd</sup> January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

A very Happy New Year and welcome back to the Spring term 2022. I hope that you have all had an enjoyable and safe festive season. We are looking forward to welcoming students back to the College during the first week of term from Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> to Friday 7<sup>th</sup> January during our phased return.

As you will be aware, there has been a great deal of information published by the government over the holiday period regarding the ongoing Covid situation and also speculation about further restrictions that may be put in place over the coming days and weeks.

The College has received an update from the Department for Education, a summary of which is given below, and I would be grateful for your support in helping us with this.

### **Testing for students after the holiday period**

All students for whom we have parental consent will undertake one on-site test, on their return to College this week. This will help boost testing participation and reduce transmission after a period of social mixing during the holidays. Students are then strongly encouraged to continue testing twice weekly at home and to [report all results to NHS Test and Trace](#) and positive results to the College.

Even if your child has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days, they are strongly encouraged to take part in the LFD testing arranged at the College on-site and or at home once they have completed their isolation period for their prior infection.

A reminder of the staggered return dates this week:

Date	Year Groups returning to College	Year Groups <u>NOT</u> in College (remote learning)	Notes for returning Year Group
Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> January	Years 7, 11, Years 12, 13/14	Years 8, 9, 10	To be based in tutor rooms
Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> January	Year 8	Years 9, 10	To assemble in the Sports Hall
Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> January	Year 9	Year 10	To assemble in the Sports Hall
Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> January	Year 10		To assemble in the Sports Hall

### **Information on the changes to the self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19**

Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10 day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason.

Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. If both these test results are negative, and your child does not have a high temperature, they may end their self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to College from day 8.

Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10 day period of self-isolation. Further information is available in the [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection](#).

### **Daily testing for close contacts of COVID-19**

People who are fully vaccinated, or children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, should take an LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend the College as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.

## **Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advice on COVID-19 vaccination for at-risk 5 to 11 year olds, and booster doses for at-risk 12 to 15 year olds and all 16 to 17 year olds**

On Wednesday 22 December, the government accepted advice from the [Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation \(JCVI\)](#) that a primary course of vaccination should be offered to children aged 5 to 11 years old who are in a clinical risk group, or who are a household contact of someone (of any age) who is immunosuppressed. The NHS is working through updated guidance and will set out how this is going to be operationalised shortly.

In response to the threat from the Omicron variant, the JCVI advised that a Pfizer booster vaccine should be offered to children aged 12 to 15 years old who are in a clinical risk group or who are a household contact of immunosuppressed individuals, and those who are severely immunosuppressed and have had a third primary dose, and all young people aged 16 to 17 years old.

The NHS will communicate how eligible children and young people can get their boosters shortly.

### **Updated guidance on the use of face coverings**

On their return to school this week, students are to wear face coverings in classrooms in addition to the existing measure already in place for coverings to be worn in all communal areas. The advice is short term only, to support students and teachers as they return to College this term. The advice on face coverings in classrooms will be in place until Wednesday 26 January, when Plan B regulations are currently scheduled to expire, at which point it will be reviewed.

Please ensure your child comes to school with a face covering as the College only has a small contingency stock of face coverings available if an individual has forgotten or damaged their own.

Thank you, in advance, for your support with the above and we look forward to welcoming back all students throughout this week.

Finally, I would like to bring to your attention my concern that the College may be faced with high levels of staff absence early in the Spring Term. We have yet to see the impact of social mixing over the holiday period, but should we experience high levels of teacher absence every effort will be made to continue with face to face teaching using existing resources (including support staff) and or agency staff. If this is not possible, remote learning will be introduced for some students. I will of course keep you updated as we learn more.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Plumb', written in a cursive style.

Dr Jeremy Plumb  
Headteacher